

Cap'n Warren's Wards

By JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

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CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

"But you have. Not in words, perhaps, but you have told me. I know. Please go on and tell me all. If you don't," with determination, "I shall make Uncle Elisha tell me as soon as he comes. I shall."

Sylvester sighed. "Well, by George!" he repeated feelingly. "I'll tell you one thing, young woman, you're wasting your talents. You should be a member of the bar. Any one who can lead a battle scarred veteran of cross examination like myself into a trap and then spring it on him, as you have done, is gifted by Providence. I ought not to say another word on the subject," he declared emphatically. "What Captain Warren will say to me when he finds this out is unpleasant to consider. What is it you want me to tell you?"

"Everything. I want you to sit down here by me and tell me the whole story from the beginning. Please."

He hesitated a moment longer and then, his mind made up, returned to his chair, crossed his legs and began. "Here it is," he said.

"Caroline, about twenty years ago or such matter your father was a comparatively poor man—poor, I mean, compared to what he afterward became. But he was a clever man, an able business man, one who saw opportunities and grasped them. At that time he obtained a grant in South America for—"

"I know," she interrupted. "The Akrae Rubber company was formed. You told Steve and me all about that. What I want to know is—"

"Wait. I did not tell you all about it. I said that another man invested \$10,000 with your father to form that company. That man, so we now know, was your uncle, Captain Elisha Warren."

"I guessed that. Of course it must have been he."

"It was. The captain had saved some money; also at that time he idolized his brother and believed in his shrewdness and capability. He invested this \$10,000 on Rodgers Warren's word that the investment was likely to be a good one, and that to help the latter in business. For a few years the company did nothing. During that time your father and uncle disagreed—concerning another matter, quite unconnected with this one—and they did not see each other again while Rodgers lived. In that long period the Akrae company made millions. But Elisha supposed it to be bankrupt and worthless, because—well, to be frank, because his brother wrote him to that effect."

"Now we come to the will. Your father, Caroline, was not a bad man at heart. He realized how he had defrauded the brother who had been so kind to him, and he kept promising himself to some day repay the money he had taken. To insure that he put that note with the other papers of the company. If he did repay it could be destroyed; if he did not, if he should die, it would be there to prove—what it did prove. But always in his mind was the thought of you and Steve, the children he loved. He had quarreled with his brother, it is true. He had cheated him, but restitution for that cheat he had provided. But what would become of you, left—in case he died without making restitution—peniless? He knew his brother, as I said, knew his character, respected his honesty and believed in his conscientiousness and his big heart. So he made his will, and in it, as you know, he appointed Elisha your guardian. He threw his children and their future upon the mercy and generosity of the brother he had wronged. That is his reason, as we surmise it, for making that will."

CHAPTER XIX.

"Yes, because I want him." SYLVESTER paused. Caroline did not speak for a moment; then she asked:

"And no one knew—your or my uncle or any one of—all this until last March?"

"No. Graves had, with his usual care and patience, pieced together the evidence and investigated until we were sure that a stockholder in the Akrae company existed and that all of your father's estate belonged to him. Who that stockholder was we did not know until that day of the meeting at our office. Then Captain Warren told us."

"But he did not know either?"

"Not until then. He supposed his Akrae stock worthless and had practically forgotten it. When we told him of its value, of the note and of the missing shareholder, he knew, of course. One would have thought he was the wrongdoer and not the wronged. He would have gone straight to you and asked your pardon if we would have permitted it."

"But, Mr. Sylvester, now we are coming to the part I cannot understand. Of course the estate belonged to him. I know that. It is his. But why didn't he tell Steve and me the truth then, at once?"

"Caroline, Caroline, don't you understand yet? Do you imagine for one moment that your uncle intends keeping that money?"

She stared at him in utter amazement.

"Keeping it?" she repeated. "Why not? It is his. It belongs to him."

"Caroline, I'm afraid you don't know him even yet. He was for going to you at once and destroying the note in your presence. He would have done it, but we persuaded him to wait and think it over for a day or two. He did think and then decided to wait a little longer for your sake."

"For my sake? For mine?" She passed her hand in a bewildered way across her forehead. "Mr. Sylvester, I don't seem to understand even now. I—"

"For your sake, Caroline. Remember, at that time you were engaged to Malcolm Dunn."

Her intent gaze wavered. She drew a long breath. "I see," she said slowly. "Oh—I see."

"Yes. Captain Warren is one of the best judges of character I ever met. The Dunn did not deceive him for one moment. He was certain Malcolm intended marrying you because of your money. For that matter, so was I. He knew you must see the proof with your own eyes. And he showed it to you."

"But then," she begged distractedly, "why couldn't he tell me after that? I—I am so stupid, I suppose—but, Mr. Sylvester, all this is—is—"

"He might have told you then, but he did not think it best. Caroline, your uncle has always believed in you. Even when you sent him from your home he did not blame you. He said you were deceived—that was all. But, too, he has always declared that you had been, as he expressed it, 'brought up wrong.' Your money had, in a way, warped your estimate of people and things. And there was Steve. You know, Caroline, that money and what it brought were spoiling Steve. He has never been so much of a man as during the past year, when he thought himself poor. But your uncle has planned for him as well as for you, and when he believes the time has come he—"

"Please," she interrupted falteringly—"please don't say any more. Let me think, Mr. Sylvester. You say that Uncle Elisha intends giving us all that father took from him—all of it?"

"Yes, all. He considers himself merely your guardian still and will accept only his expenses from the estate."

"It is wonderful!" she repeated brokenly. "Even though we cannot take it, it is wonderful."

"What? Cannot take it?"

"Of course not! Do you suppose that either my brother or I would take the fortune that our father stole—yes, stole—from him, after he has been living almost in poverty all these years and we in luxury—on his money? Of course we shall not take it!"

"But, Caroline, I imagine you will have to take it. I understand your feelings, but I think he will compel you to take it."

"I shall not!" She sprang to her feet. "Of course I shall not! Never! Never!"

"What's that you're never going to take, Caroline—measures or another trip down in these parts? I hope 'tain't the last, 'cause I've been callin' you'd like it well enough to come again."

Caroline turned. So did Sylvester. Captain Elisha was standing in the doorway, his hand on the knob. He was smiling broadly, but as he looked at the two by the fire he ceased to smile.

"What's all this?" he asked suspiciously. "Caroline, what—Sylvester, what have you been tellin' her?"

Neither answered at once. The captain looked from one to the other.

"Sylvester!" Caroline had never seen her uncle thoroughly angry before.

"Sylvester," he cried, "have you—have you dared to tell her what you shouldn't? Didn't you promise me? If you told that girl I'll—I'll—"

His niece stepped forward. "Hugh, Uncle Elisha," she said. "He didn't tell me until I knew already. I guessed it. Then I asked for the whole truth, and he told me."

"The whole truth? Caroline?"

"Yes, uncle, the whole truth. I know you now. I thought I knew you before, but I didn't—not half. I do now."

"Oh, Caroline!" He stepped toward her and then stopped, frantic and despairing. "Caroline! Caroline!" he cried again. "Can you ever forgive me? You know—you must know I ain't ever meant to keep it. It's all yours. I just didn't give it to you right off 'cause—because—Oh, Sylvester, tell her I never meant to keep it! Tell her!"

The lawyer shook his head. "I did tell her," he said, with another shrug, "and she tells me she won't accept it."

"What?" The captain's eyes were starting from his head. "What? Won't take it? Why, it's hers—hers and Steve's! It always has been! Do you call 'late I'd rob my own brother's children? Don't talk so foolish! I won't hear such talk!"

Caroline was close to tears, but she was firm.

Captain Elisha looked at her determined face, then at the lawyer's. But he found no help there. His chin thrust forward. He nodded slowly.

"All right! All right!" he said grimly. "Sylvester, is your shop goin' to be open tomorrow?"

"Guess not, captain," was the puzzled reply. "It's Thanksgiving. Why?"

"But Graves'll be to home, won't he? I could find him at his house?"

"I presume you could." "All right, then. Caroline Warren, you listen to me. I'll give you till 2 o'clock to make up your mind to take the money that belongs to you. If you don't I swear to the Lord Almighty I'll take the first train, go straight to New York, hunt up Graves, make him go down to the office and get that note your father made out turnin' all his property over to that Akrae company. I'll get that note, and I'll burn it up. Then—then you'll have to take the money, because it'll be yours. Every bit of evidence that'll hold in law is gone."

He turned, strode to the door and out of the room. A moment later they heard a scream from Miss Baker in the kitchen: "Elisha Warren, what ails you? Are you crazy? There was no answer, but the back door closed with a tremendous bang."

A half an hour after his dramatic exit Captain Elisha was pacing up and down the floor of the barn. It was an old refuge of his, a place where he was accustomed to go when matters requiring deliberation and thought oppressed him. As he turned in his stride he saw a shadow move across the sill of the big open door. He caught his breath and stopped.

Caroline entered the barn. She came straight to him and put her hands upon the lapels of his coat. Her eyes were wet and shining.

"Caroline!" he faltered eagerly.

"You good man!" she breathed softly. "Oh, you good man!"

"Caroline!" His voice shook, but there was hope in it. "Caroline, you're goin' to take the money?"

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"Yes, Uncle Elisha," she said, "because I want him."

The clouds blew away that night, and Thanksgiving day dawned clear and cold. The gray sea was now blue. The white paint of the houses and fences glistened in the sun. The groves of pitch pine were brilliant green blotches spread like rugs here and there on the brown hills. South Denboro had thrown off its gloomy raiment and was "all dolled up for Thanksgiving," so Captain Elisha said.

The captain and Sylvester were leaning on the fence by the gate, looking up the road and waiting for Dan and the "two seater" to leave in sight around the bend. The hired man had harnessed early and driven to the station at least thirty minutes before train time. Captain Elisha was responsible for the early start. Steve was coming on that train. Possibly some one else was coming. The captain did not mean they should find no welcome or vehicle at the station.

The whistle had sounded ten minutes before. It was time for Dan to appear at the bend.

"I hope to thunder Jim got that telegram," observed the captain for the twentieth time at least since breakfast.

"So do I," replied his friend. "There's no reason why he shouldn't, is there?"

"No, no sensible one, but I've scared up no less than a couple of hundred of the other kind. If he shouldn't come—my, my, she'd be disappointed!"

He motioned with his head toward the window of Caroline's room.

They turned in time to catch a glimpse of the girl as she parted the curtains and looked out on the road. She saw them looking at her, smiled, blushed and disappeared. Both men smoked in silence for a moment; then the captain said:

"Say, Sylvester, this New York cruise of mine turned out pretty good, after all, didn't it?"

"Decidedly good. It was the making of your niece and nephew. Caroline realizes it now, and so will Steve."

"Hope so. It didn't do me any harm," with a chuckle. "I wouldn't have missed that little beat up the bay with Marm Dunn for a good deal. For a spell there was bows abreast, and 'twas hard to tell who'd turn the mark first."

Sylvester laughed. "I'll tell you what, Captain Warren," he said. "I never saw you in better spirits. Do you know what I think? I think that for a chap who has just given away half of a good sized fortune and intends giving away the other half you're the most cheerful specimen I ever saw."

The captain laughed too. "I am, ain't I?" he said. "Well, I can say truthful what I never expected to say in my life—that once I was worth half a million dollars. As for the rest of it, I'm like that millionaire—that—Hil Look! There comes Dan! See him!"

"Steve!" cried the captain excitedly. "There's Steve! And—and—yes, there's somebody on the back seat. It's Jim! He's come! Hooray!"

"Wait!" Sylvester cried. "I don't want to lose the rest of that sentence. You said you were like some millionaire. Who?"

"Don't bother me!" cried Captain Elisha. "Who? Why, I was goin' to say I was like that millionaire chap who passes out a library every time he wakes up and happens to think of it. You know who I mean. Ahoy there, Jim! Ahoy, Steve!"

He was waving his hand to the passengers in the approaching vehicle.

"That's the feller. I've come to feel about the way he says he does—that 'twould be a crime for me to die rich.'"

THE END.

SUCCUMB TO ARCTIC TENSION

Few Explorers in High Latitudes Successfully Resist Peculiar Psychological Effects.

In a paper dealing with the University of Oxford expedition to Siberia, of which he was a member, H. U. Hall of the University of Pennsylvania referred to the striking psychological effects of long daylight and long darkness in high latitudes, the Scientific American states.

As to the former, apart from the tendency to shorten sleeping hours in order to make the greatest possible use of the long day, there seems to be a kind of stimulation of the nervous system, urging people to a feverish and purposeless activity. This is especially noticed in newcomers, but the natives are not exempt from it. On the other hand, the coming of the long winter night is followed by a kind of reaction, though no general depression of vitality is apparent.

With the cessation of work the period of sociability begins, and the circumstances favor a lapse of self-control. This is the time when "Arctic hysteria" is likely to show itself. Such, for instance, is a form of hysterical seizure for which the Tungus have a special name, in which the patient sings improvisations of his own which are likely to contain absurd exaggerations or laughable glorifications of himself.

Woman's Imagination.

When a woman arrives three minutes late at a railway station she imagines that the engineer saw her coming and pulled out just for spite.

Who Is On the Lord's Side?

By REV. J. H. RALSTON, D. D.
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TEXT—Whoso is on Jehovah's side let him come unto me.—R. V.

It is related that at a certain point in Lincoln's presidential experience, when the affairs of the Union were in a precarious condition, a friend remarked to him that it was a good thing to have the Lord on our side. Mr. Lincoln very seriously replied that he was more concerned about whether he were on the Lord's side. There are indications that the German kaiser is more concerned on having the Lord on his side than about being on the Lord's side.



The natural tendency of man is to seek his own or the things of humanity, rather than the things of the Lord, and man is simply asking what some particular course will bring to him, or what it will bring to his time. The chief end of man in these days is not to glorify God. In this, grievous wrong is done. When a course of action is before one, the chief question should not be, "How will it affect me?" nor, indeed, "How will it affect my neighbor?" but "How will it affect God?"

The great need of the day is a new sensing of God—God at the beginning, God in the middle, God at the ending. The right thing for man is to ask where God is, and to go where he is. If man would do that many of his great theological questions would be settled. God manifests himself through his Word, and if men would go to the Word of God with these questions they would soon be substantially correct on all of them.

The text suggests the question, "Who is on the Lord's side?" or rather, "What man or woman has a right to say that he is on the Lord's side?"

In the particular case before us, the people had made a golden calf and were worshipping it. To do that was to break the first two commandments of the Decalogue, and it became open idolatry. It is inevitable that a man worship. If he does not worship God he will worship something, or some one else. Nor can a man be on the Lord's side if he does those things that the Lord hates.

If a man would know his duty to the Lord he should seek to know what the Lord thinks of certain things, and here again he must take the Lord's judgment through his Word, for he cannot know what the Lord thinks unless he knows his Word. As to particular actions, a man may be left to his own judgment, but as to the great principles that lie at the root of things, the Lord makes clear declaration in his Word. Does the Lord love a liar, brutality, deception? The remnant of God's image in man says at once, "No! No!" Does the Lord favor truth, liberty, kindness? That same remnant of God's image says, "Yes! Yes!" And consequently, the duty is clear, and he should stand for these things. We might sum up everything by saying, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The scene connected with our text was probably this: There was a golden calf and people were dancing about it. Moses stood aloof and made the cry, "Whoso is on the Lord's side, let him come to me." According to the constitution and nature of man we